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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

CONSUMER AND MARKETING SERVICE

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**UNITED STATES  
STANDARDS**  
*for grades of*  
**CANNED  
DRIED PRUNES**



**EFFECTIVE MAY 24, 1967**

**First Issue**

*As Amended*

These standards supersede the standards  
which have been in effect since  
March 1, 1946



This first issue of the United States Standards for Grades of Canned Dried Prunes was amended, effective May 24, 1967. These amended standards contain minor modifications in format (including new section numbers) and rearrangement of text. None of the requirements were changed by the amended standards, published in the Federal Register of May 24, 1967 (32 F. R. 7570).

As is the case of other standards for processed fruits and vegetables, these standards are designed to serve as a convenient basis for sales, for establishing quality control programs, and for determining loan values. They will also serve as a basis for the inspection of this commodity by Federal inspection service, which is available for the inspection of other processed products as well.

The Department welcomes suggestions which might aid in improving these standards in future revisions. Comments may be submitted to, and copies of these standards obtained from:

Chief, Processed Products Standardization  
and Inspection Branch  
Fruit and Vegetable Division, C&MS  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Washington, D. C. 20250

# UNITED STATES STANDARDS FOR GRADES OF CANNED DRIED PRUNES

Effective May 24, 1967

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Authority:

(Secs. 203, 205, 60 Stat. 1087, as amended, 1020, as amended; 7 U.S.C. 1622, 1624)

## PRODUCT DESCRIPTION, TYPES AND VARIETIES, GRADES

### § 52.5601 Product description.

Canned dried prunes are the whole, ripe fruit of the plum tree (*Prunus domestica*) from which the greater portion of moisture was removed and which are subsequently processed, usually by

rehydration in boiling water or steam; by packing with or without the addition of sirup, sugar, or a liquid medium; with or without the addition of a slight amount of edible acid; with or without the addition of a seasoning ingredient, and are sufficiently processed by heat to assure preservation of the product in hermetically sealed containers.

### § 52.5602 Types and varieties of canned dried prunes.

(a) "Sweet types" include such varieties as French, Imperials, Sugar, and Robe de Sergeant varieties.

(b) "Tart type" includes the Italian variety.

### § 52.5603 Grades of canned dried prunes.

(a) "U.S. Grade A" or "U.S. Fancy" canned dried prunes are dried prunes of similar varietal characteristics which possess a normal flavor and are of such quality with respect to color, uniformity of size, absence of defects, and character of fruit as to score not less than 90 points when scored in accordance with the scoring system outlined herein.

(b) "U.S. Grade B" or "U.S. Choice" canned dried prunes are dried prunes of similar varietal characteristics which possess a reasonably uniform typical color; are reasonably free from defects; possess a reasonably good, tender, fleshy texture; possess a normal flavor; and are of such quality with respect to uniformity of size as to score not less than 75 points when scored in accordance with the scoring system outlined herein.

(c) "U.S. Grade C" or "U.S. Standard" canned dried prunes are dried prunes which possess a fairly uniform, fairly good typical color; are fairly free from defects; possess a fairly good texture; possess a normal flavor; and are of such quality with respect to uniformity of size as to score not less than 60 points when scored in accordance with the scoring system outlined herein.

Compliance with the provisions of these standards shall not excuse failure to comply with the provisions of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act or with applicable State laws and regulations.



(d) "U.S. Grade D" or "Substandard" canned dried prunes are dried prunes that are wholesome and edible but fail to meet the requirements of U.S. Grade C or U.S. Standard.

**LIQUID MEDIA, FILL OF CONTAINER,  
DRAINED WEIGHTS, COUNTS**

**§ 52.5604 Sirup density.**

(a) Canned dried prunes are usually packed in sirup, or other packing medium. Sirup "cut-out" requirements, however, are not incorporated in the grades of the finished product as sirup, as such, is not a factor of quality for the purpose of these grades.

(b) Canned dried prunes will be certified as to grade without regard to sirup density, but in each instance Federal inspection certificates will indicate the density of the sirup found upon examination. When samples are officially drawn, the designation of sirup will be based upon the average sirup density of all containers examined, provided the range of variability is within the limits of good packing practice. For this purpose—

(1) "Extra heavy sirup" means that the sirup tests 30° or more Brix.

(2) "Heavy sirup" means that the sirup tests 24° to 30° Brix.

(3) "Light sirup" means that the sirup tests 18° to 24° Brix.

(4) Sirup that tests less than 18° Brix is considered "Water pack."

**§ 52.5605 Recommended fill of container.**

The container shall be filled with dried prunes as full as practicable without impairment of quality. The product and packing medium occupies not less than 90 percent of the total volume capacity of the container.

**§ 52.5606 Recommended minimum drained weights.**

(a) Drained weights of canned dried prunes are determined by emptying the contents of the container upon a circular sieve of proper diameter, containing eight meshes to the inch (0.097-inch perforations) and allowing to drain for 2 minutes. A sieve 8 inches in diameter is used for No. 2½ size containers and smaller, and a sieve 12 inches in diam-

eter is used for containers larger than No. 2½ size.

(b) The recommended minimum drained weights in the containers commonly used in packing canned dried prunes are shown in the following table:

Container size or name	Recommended drained weight		
	Metal containers		Glass containers
	Regular pack	Heavy pack	Regular pack
8-oz.....	5½ oz.....		
No. 1 Tall.....	10¾ oz.....		
No. 2.....	13 oz.....		
No. 2½.....	19 oz.....	29 oz.....	18 oz.
No. 10.....	70 oz.....	110 oz.....	

(c) Canned dried prunes that meet the recommended drained weight requirements for "Heavy Pack" will be certified as "Heavy Pack" in addition to the grade statement.

(d) When certifying samples which have been officially drawn from lots of canned dried prunes, compliance of the entire sample with recommended minimum drained weights will be determined by averaging the drained weights of all containers in the sample, provided the range of variability is within the limits of good packing practice. If the average thus obtained is not less than the recommended drained weight shown in the foregoing table, the samples will be certified without exception.

(e) Except as provided above, containers of dried prunes that fall below the recommended minimum drained weight will be certified with the additional statement: "Below recommended minimum drained weight."

**§ 52.5607 Count of prunes.**

Federal inspection certificates will indicate the count of prunes found upon examination.

**FACTORS OF QUALITY**

**§ 52.5608 Ascertaining the grade.**

The grade of canned dried prunes may be ascertained by considering, in addition to the foregoing requirements, the following factors: Color, uniformity of

size, absence of defects, and character of fruit. The relative importance of each factor has been expressed numerically on a scale of 100. The maximum number of points that may be given for each factor is:

	<i>Points</i>
Color .....	20
Uniformity of size.....	15
Absence of defects.....	30
Character of fruit.....	35
Total score.....	100

#### § 52.5609 Ascertaining the rating of each factor.

The essential variations within each factor are so described that the value may be ascertained for each factor and expressed numerically. The numerical ranges within each factor are inclusive. For example, the range 18 to 20 means 18, 19, and 20.

#### § 52.5610 Color.

(a) (A) *Classification*. Canned dried prunes that possess a practically uniform, typical color may be given a score of 18 to 20 points. "Practically uniform, typical color" means that the color of the skins of the prunes is typical and may be black, blue black, or reddish brown; and that not more than 5 percent by count of the prunes may possess a dull chocolate brown surface color or may possess abnormal darkening of the flesh due to caramelization or fermentation.

(b) (B) *Classification*. If the canned dried prunes possess a reasonably uniform, typical color, a score of 15 to 17 points may be given. "Reasonably uniform, typical color" means that the color of the skins of the prunes is typical and may be black, blue black, or reddish brown; and that not more than 10 percent by count of the prunes may possess a dull chocolate brown surface color or may possess abnormal darkening of the flesh due to caramelization or fermentation.

(c) (C) *Classification*. If the canned dried prunes possess a fairly uniform, fairly good typical color, a score of 12 to 14 points may be given. Canned dried prunes that fall into this classification shall not be graded above U.S. Grade C or U.S. Standard, regardless of the total

score for the product. "Fairly uniform, fairly good typical color" means that the skins of the prunes may vary in shades of typical colors and that not more than 15 percent by count of the prunes may possess a dull chocolate brown surface color or may possess abnormal darkening of the flesh due to caramelization or fermentation.

(d) (D) *Classification*. Canned dried prunes that are definitely off color for any reason or that otherwise fail to meet requirements of paragraph (c) of this section may be given a score of zero to 11 points and shall not be graded above U.S. Grade D or Substandard, regardless of the total score for the product.

#### § 52.5611 Uniformity of size.

(a) (A) *Classification*. Canned dried prunes that are practically uniform in size may be given a score of 14 or 15 points. "Practically uniform in size" means that the weight of the largest prune may not exceed the weight of the smallest prune by more than 75 percent.

(b) (B) *Classification*. If the canned dried prunes are reasonably uniform in size, a score of 12 or 13 points may be given. "Reasonably uniform in size" means that the weight of the largest prune may not be more than twice the weight of the smallest prune.

(c) (C) *Classification*. Canned dried prunes that vary in size may be given a score of 10 or 11 points.

#### § 52.5612 Absence of defects.

(a) *Definitions of defects*. The factor of absence of defects refers to the degree of freedom from the following:

(1) Prunes that possess growth cracks, splits, breaks in the skin, or skin damage of the following descriptions:

(i) Calloused growth cracks aggregating more than  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch in length.

(ii) Splits or breaks not having calloused edges when the flesh is mashed out beyond the protecting skin so as to affect materially the normal appearance of the prunes.

(iii) Any cracks, splits, or breaks open to the pit.

(iv) Skin damage caused by over-dripping, rain processing, or other causes which materially affects the appearance of the prunes.



(2) Prunes that possess areas of scab of the following descriptions:

(i) Tough or thick scab exceeding in the aggregate the area of a circle  $\frac{3}{8}$  inch in diameter.

(ii) Scab of other character exceeding in the aggregate the area of a circle  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch in diameter.

(3) Prunes that are so affected by burning or scorching in the sun, or in dehydration, as to damage materially the skin or flesh.

(4) Prunes that are damaged by insect injury or other similar defects.

(5) "Tough or thick scab" means thick leathery areas on the skin frequently formed as the result of thrip injury, mildew, leaf chafing, limb rubs, or other means. Such scab is to be distinguished from "scab or other character" which is more or less inconsequential and practically blends in color with the skin on the portion of the prune not affected.

(6) "Damaged by insect injury" means healed or unhealed surface blemishes, and healed or unhealed blemishes in the flesh which materially affect the appearance, edibility, or keeping quality of the fruit but which do not possess evidence of insect infestation.

(7) "Damaged by other similar defects" means any injury or defect or group of defects not mentioned herein which materially affect the appearance, edibility or keeping quality of the fruit.

(b) (A) *Classification*. Canned dried prunes that are practically free from defects may be given a score of 27 to 30 points. "Practically free from defects" means that there may be present not more than 5 percent by count of prunes affected by any defect or any combination of defects mentioned in paragraph

(a) (1), (2), (3), and (4) of this section. One prune that is defective is permitted if it exceeds 5 percent by count.

(c) (B) *Classification*. If the canned dried prunes are reasonably free from defects, a score of 22 to 26 points may be given. "Reasonably free from defects" means that there may be present not more than 10 percent by count of prunes affected by any defect or any combination of defects mentioned in paragraph (a) (1), (2), (3), and (4) of this section. One prune that is defective is permitted if it exceeds 10 percent by count.

(d) (C) *Classification*. If the canned dried prunes are fairly free from defects, a score of 17 to 21 points may be given. Canned dried prunes that fall into this classification shall not be graded above U.S. Grade C or U.S. Standard, regardless of the total score for the product. "Fairly free from defects" means that there may be present not more than 15 percent by count of prunes affected by any defect or combination of defects mentioned in paragraph (a) (1), (2), (3), and (4) of this section.

(e) (D) *Classification*. Canned dried prunes that fail to meet the requirements of paragraph (d) of this section, may be given a score of 0 to 16 points and shall not be graded above U.S. Grade D or Substandard, regardless of the total score for the product.

#### § 52.5613 Character of fruit.

(a) (A) *Classification*. Canned dried prunes that possess a good, tender, fleshy texture may be given a score of 31 to 35 points. "Good tender, fleshy texture" means that the prunes are thick-fleshed; that not more than 5 percent by count of prunes have fibrous or tough skins; and that not more than 10 percent by count of prunes may be soft or hard in texture. One prune that possesses a tough skin, is soft, or is hard, is permitted, if one prune exceeds 5 percent or 10 percent by count.

(b) (B) *Classification*. If canned dried prunes possess a reasonably good, tender, fleshy texture, a score of 26 to 30 points may be given. "Reasonably good, tender, fleshy texture" means that the prunes are reasonably thick-fleshed; that not more than 10 percent by count of prunes may have fibrous or tough skins; and that not more than 15 percent by count of prunes may be soft or hard in texture.

(c) (C) *Classification*. If the canned dried prunes possess a fairly good texture, a score of 21 to 25 points may be given. Canned dried prunes that fall into this classification shall not be graded above U.S. Grade C or U.S. Standard, regardless of the total score for the product. "Fairly good texture" means that the prunes may vary in thickness and texture of flesh or may possess fibrous or tough skins; and that not more than 20 percent by count of prunes may be soft or hard in texture.



(d) (D) *Classification.* Canned dried prunes that fail to meet the requirements of paragraph (c) of this section may be given a score of zero to 20 points and shall not be graded above U.S. Grade D or Substandard, regardless of the total score for the product.

#### EXPLANATION OF TERMS

##### § 52.5614 Explanation of terms.

(a) "24° Brix" means that the packing medium surrounding the fruit tests 24 degrees when tested with a Brix spindle, or hydrometer, or with a refractometer, read at the proper temperature for the instrument used.

(b) "Normal canned dried prune flavor" means that the product is free from objectionable odors or objectionable flavors of any kind.

#### LOT COMPLIANCE

##### § 52.5615 Ascertaining the grade of a lot.

The grade of a lot of canned dried prunes covered by these standards is determined by the procedures set forth in the Regulations Governing Inspection and Certification of Processed Fruits and Vegetables, Processed Products Thereof, and Certain Other Processed Food Products (§§ 52.1 through 52.87).

#### SCORE SHEET

##### § 52.5616 Score sheet for canned dried prunes.

Number, size, kind of container.....  
Can mark.....  
Label.....  
Net weight (in ounces).....  
Vacuum reading (in inches).....  
Drained weight (in ounces).....  
Sirup (Degrees Brix).....  
Type.....  
Count.....

Factors	Score points	
Color.....	20	(A) 18-20 (B) 15-17 (C) 12-14 (D) 10-11
Uniformity of size.....	15	(A) 14-15 (B) 12-13 (C) 10-11
Absence of defects.....	30	(A) 27-30 (B) 22-26 (C) 17-21 (D) 10-16
Character of fruit.....	35	(A) 31-35 (B) 26-30 (C) 21-25 (D) 10-20
Total score.....	100	
Grade.....		
Flavor.....		

<sup>1</sup> Indicates limiting rules within classification.

Dated: May 16, 1967.

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